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25 August 1969

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Steering Committee/ARGO Meeting, 9 July 1969

1. [] and I attended a meeting of the Steering Committee/ARGO on 9 July 1969. The meeting was held in Room 208 of the Executive Office Building. This memorandum is a report of that meeting.

2. [] of the Army Corps of Engineers began the session by introducing a briefing on the Indiana and the Wabash River Canal projects. The Indiana project was an exercise assigned to the Army Corps of Engineers in an attempt to determine whether KH-4 photography provides sufficient information for the initial planning of road and airfield locations. Utilizing a photo-mosaic of the area under consideration, the Corps of Engineers proposed two probable road routes and three airfield locations. Ground truth compiled from conventional sources by the State of Indiana confirmed the applicability of these routes and locations. The usability of satellite photography for the initial planning of such construction was thereby verified.

The second project presented, "The Wabash River Canal Study," utilized KH-4 coverage to determine the feasibility of constructing a barge canal connecting Lake Michigan with the Wabash River. Through the use of a photo-mosaic compiled from KH-4 coverage it was determined that six problems exist which make the construction and use of the proposed canal impractical. The major problem confronting the canal proponents is the lack of an adequate source of water required for canal operation. Thus, it has been determined that the canal is not feasible and the project should be abandoned. A problem, however, arises from the fact that, although the feasibility study has been accomplished, security restrictions permit disclosure of only the conclusions of the study. Congressional proponents of the Canal Project would naturally challenge these conclusions and since the Army Corps of Engineers cannot release the source of the data or methods employed for reaching the stated conclusions, the conclusions in themselves are of little value. Thus, although the outcome is already known, the study is being re-done by conventional means in order that the conclusions can be re-formed from a public documentable source. It is unfortunate that funds and manpower must be expended to reach a foreknown end but it is hoped that the major effort will be employed in documenting the known problems

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thereby still effecting some manpower savings. A nine page extraction from the ARGO Steering Committee briefing on this study is included as an attachment to this paper.

3. The problem of classification was next discussed. Dissemination, to the public, of information gained from the use of satellite photography is faced by all committee members. Cleared personnel using classified materials as an information source are often required to substantiate their decisions and judgements to uncleared planners and engineers. Since the information source cannot be disclosed, substantiation is difficult. In this regard, congressmen, who by nature require proof of information derogatory to their pet projects, prove to be the Peaceful Uses Committee's worst enemy. It was mentioned that, in an attempt to eliminate this problem, a reconstituting machine is presently under development. This piece of gear will have the capability of altering the appearance of satellite imagery regarding scale, size of format, coverage per format, shadow direction, etc. Thus, many of the parameters which disclose the actual source of the photography will be changed to simulate that accomplished by conventional means. It was indicated, however, that other clues, such as vast amounts of coverage within the same time frame which indicate other than the conventional sources, continue to be a problem.

Though it would seem that the classification aspect would tend to dampen the use of satellite coverage for civilian needs, the cost savings afforded by its use makes the problem bearable. It was estimated that the cost savings afforded by the use of satellite coverage over conventional aerial coverage was in the realm of 200 to 1. This savings is based strictly on usage since the satellite coverage is provided to the various users at no charge. If the users were required to share in the cost of the satellite program to obtain their needed coverage, the figures might be somewhat different. It was suggested in fact, that possibly civilian users of satellite coverage be charged for their usage and thus, somewhat reduce the reconnaissance costs of the Intelligence Community. Most members of the Peaceful Uses Committee were not too favorably impressed by this suggestion.

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4. [] presented the Manhattan Tanker Project. This is a study to determine the feasibility of transporting oil from Alaska to the U.S. Mainland on a year around basis via the Northwest Passage across the top of the North American Continent. The appropriate ship for such a route is a combination tanker/ice breaker. The ship chosen for this test was the tanker S.S. Manhattan, presently the largest tanker in the U.S. Fleet. The S.S. Manhattan is now undergoing a modification which consists of adding an ice breaking bow. It has been calculated that once underway the S.S. Manhattan will be capable of breaking ice with a thickness of six to eight feet in a continuous mode and up to 50 foot thickness in a ramming mode. An attempt will be made to skirt areas of ice with a thickness of over 50 feet. To locate these areas, aerial surveillance of the route has been requested. Two flights per week are required for the forecasting of the ice ridges along the planned route. Support will be furnished by the U.S. Coast Guard employing conventional reconnaissance aircraft. Covert use of the SR-71 aircraft is also planned to obtain a more extensive/accurate data base than can be provided by the overt Coast Guard sources. []

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Since a portion of the Manhattan's voyage will transverse Canadian waters and surveillance aircraft will penetrate Canadian air space, cooperation with Canada on this project is imperative. The S.S. Manhattan will be advised of problem ice areas ahead of her as detected from the aerial photography and her route adjusted accordingly. The data will also be utilized to form a base for future studies of the static and shifting ice conditions in these waters. To provide additional photography of the route area, satellite coverage has been requested and will be obtained if a mission is flying during the voyage of the Manhattan and targeting/operational conditions make it possible. Should satellite coverage be obtained, NPIC support of this project may be requested.

A successful voyage of the Manhattan will establish the precedent for year around use of this shipping lane and the need for additional tanker/ice breakers. A second tanker/ice breaker twice as large as the S.S. Manhattan is already on the drawing board and will be constructed if this route proves favorable. At present the sailing date set for the S.S. Manhattan is the end of July 1969.

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5. [] introduced the idea that the Peaceful Uses Committee member agencies contribute funds to be used for payment of a contractor who would provide support on the various Peaceful Uses projects. He further proposed that the contract, thus established, be open ended and that [] be the contractor chosen. [] seems to be in good stead since the contractor selection appeared favorable to everyone present, however, the idea of contribution funding met opposition due to the present economic situation of all Government agencies involved. [] stated that [] had been proposed as the contractor because of its proven capability, close association with the reconnaissance community, prior use of satellite photography and clearance level of employees. The additional suggestion was made that NPIC is in the best position to provide some degree of contract monitorship and also to supply mission information and materials to []. This would be a very workable arrangement since NPIC personnel are already familiar with [] employees and procedures. The political aspect, however, of a defense/military agency being associated with civilian planning, research, etc., is undesirable. In any case, we must wait to see if the necessary funding is forthcoming, a supporting contract is approved, [] is the contractor selected and NPIC is asked to participate in the program.

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6. The privilege of attending this meeting proved to be extremely valuable to the author regarding civilian usefulness of satellite photography.

I have become more appreciative of the problems involved with utilizing a covert information source for overt activities. It has become evident to me that the available information and data base provided by satellite photography is of definite value to civilian enterprises for planning and engineering in such areas as agriculture, conservation, transportation, urban renewals, etc. Continued attendance to the Peaceful Uses Committee meetings will enable the APSD representative to become more knowledgeable in the efforts of the committee and its members and thus be better prepared to offer assistance pertaining to the technical aspects of the systems involved.

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Section I

Image Evaluation Branch
APSD/TSSG/NPIC

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Attachment: a/s

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NOTE

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Six of these pages contain the markings "THIS DOCUMENT MAY NOT BE RELEASED TO CONTRACTOR ORGANIZATIONS OR PERSONNEL WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL OF ENGINEER STRATEGIC STUDIES GROUP, OCE."

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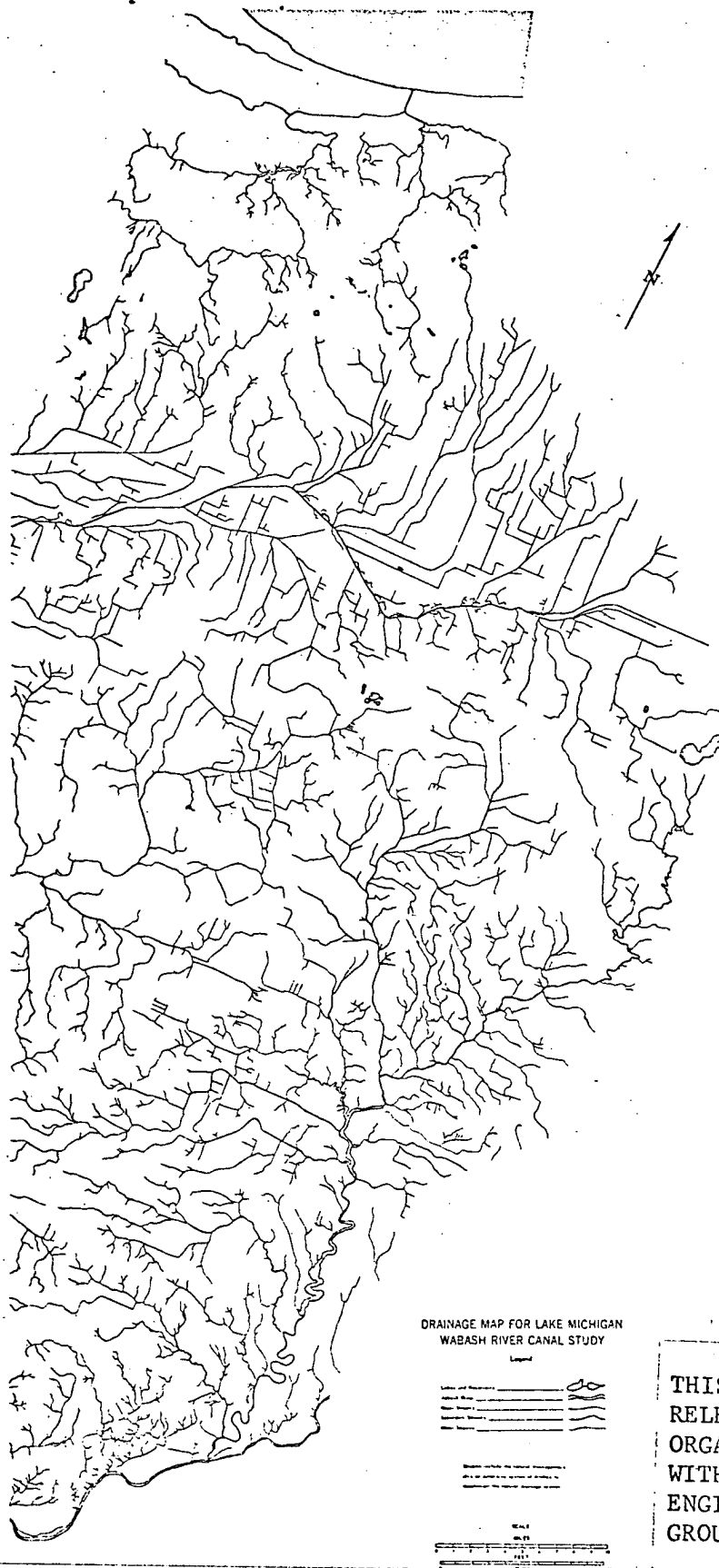
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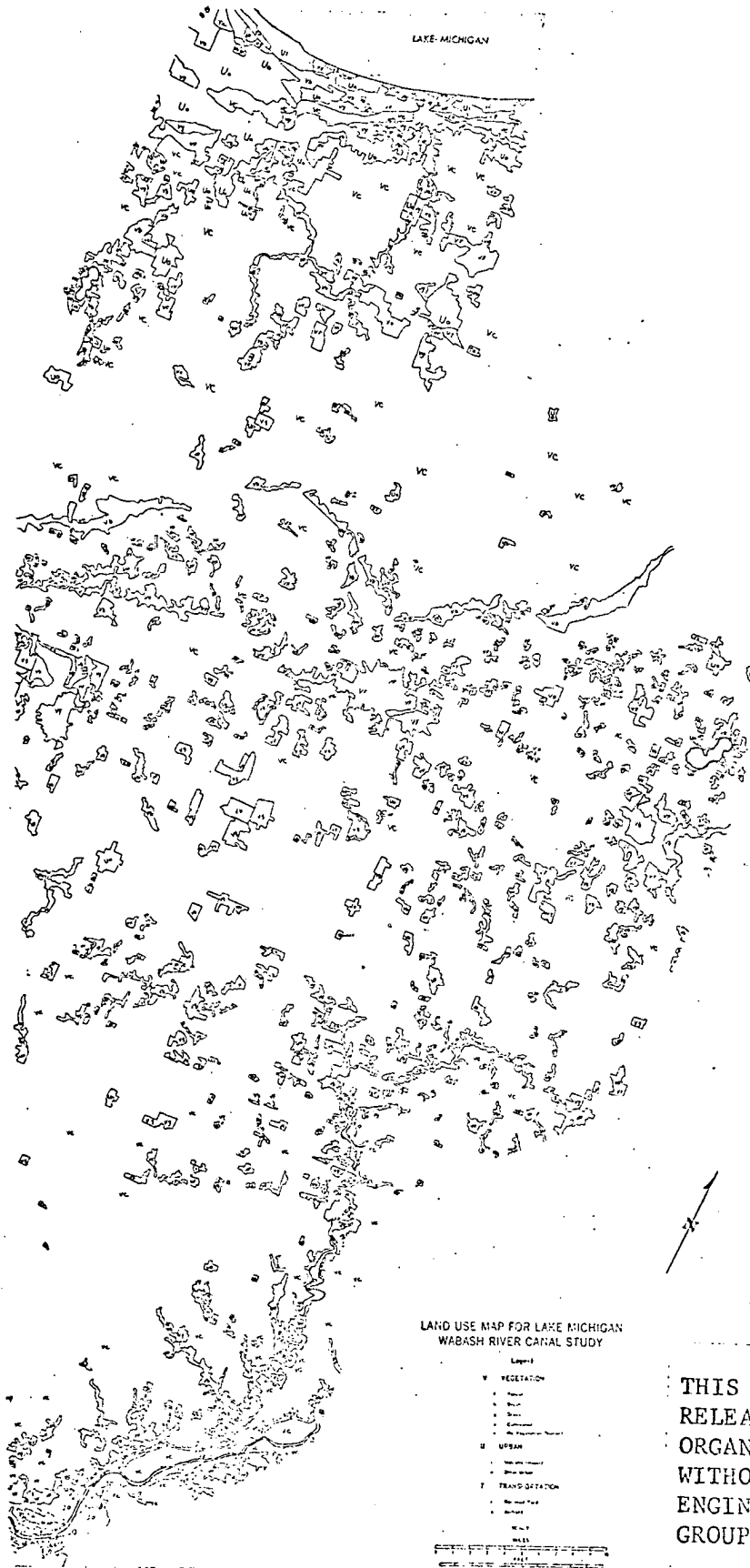
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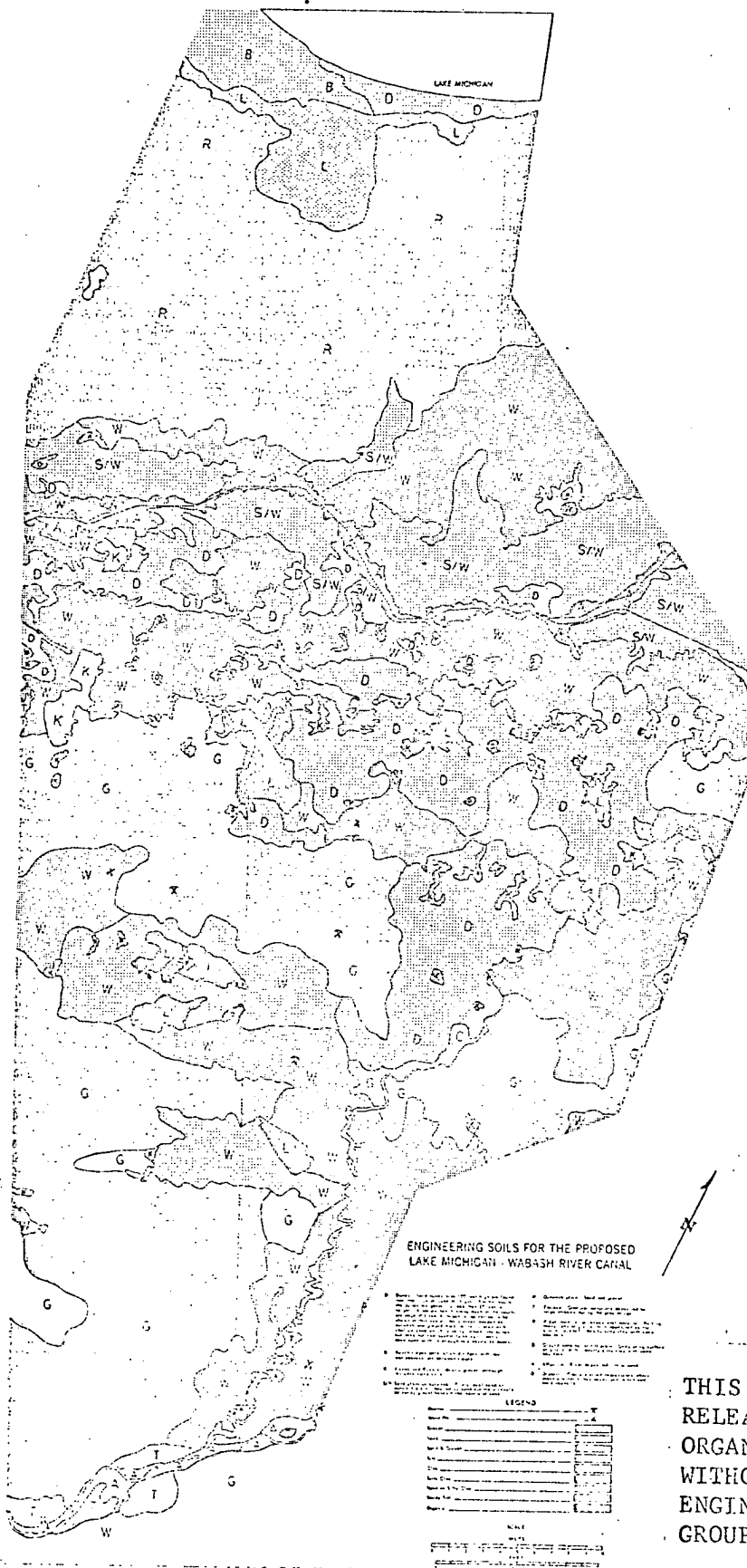


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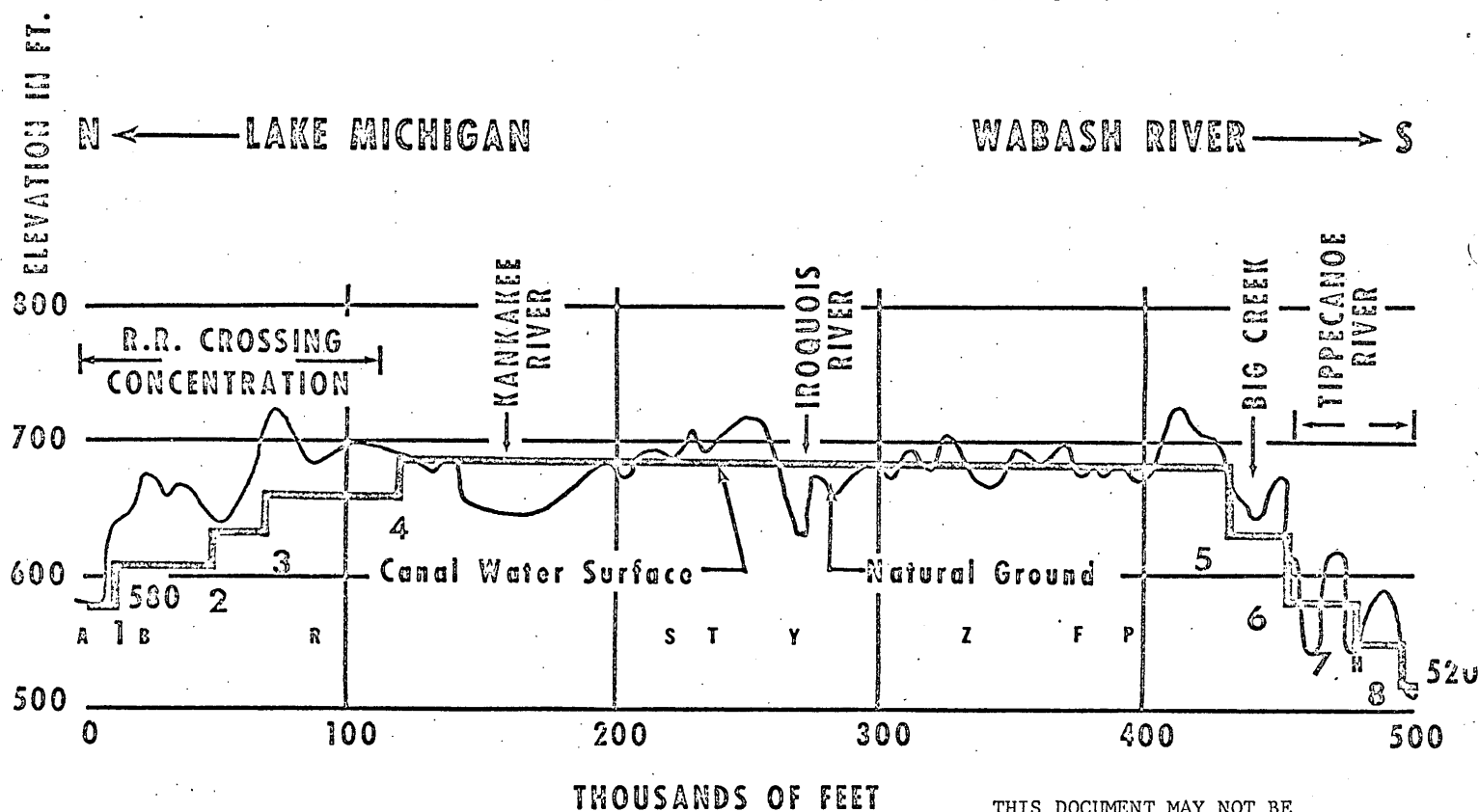
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PROFILE OF CANAL ROUTE



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MAJOR PROBLEMS

- INTERRUPTION OF TRANSPORTATION
- EXTENSIVE LAND USE
- SOURCE OF WATER FOR OPERATION
- FEW GOOD WATER STORAGE SITES
- SEEPAGE IN EXTENSIVE AREAS
OF GRANULAR SOILS
- CROSSING THE KANKAKEE RIVER